

Nathaniel Pitt Langford

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NATHANIEL PITT LANGFORD,*

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The Vigilante, the Explorer, the Expounder and First Superintendent of the Yellowstone Park .

BY OLIN D. WHEELER.

We are wont to flatter ourselves that we live under a republican form of government, one where the sovereignty is vested in the people. Every form of government, including our own, has, of course, its excellencies and its deficiencies. Among the latter, in a democracy, is the apparent and, all too frequently the real, lack of appreciation and of honor shown to those who have accomplished notable things and achieved distinction in one way or another.

Were we living under a monarchy or an oligarchy, where absolute authority is centered in one or a few individuals, Nathaniel P. Langford and that coterie of now well known explorers of the Yellowstone region in 1870 would long years ago have been knighted or otherwise signally honored for their services to the nation, and indeed to the world.

It so happens, however, that the few monuments which the great Republic officially erects, or the resolutions of thanks to individuals for meritorious actions performed which its representative Congress votes, have been very largely in honor of those alone who have distinguished themselves in warfare.

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Although "peace hath her victories no less renowned than war," the records of her achievements are found buried, all too often, in simple and sometimes prosaic reports of limited circulation, with now and then the story finding its way into our literature. There are few memorials, or monuments of bronze or marble, that commemorate the services of men like Lewis and Clark, Astor, Hunt, Fremont, Ashley, Bonneville, Powell, Carson, Bridger, and others, services rendered to the country in various channels, yet all of them more or less important, and performed in modest, simple, and unpretentious manner.

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That the Washburn-Doane exploration of 1870 into the now celebrated Yellowstone Park region was productive of most important results, nationally, in its particular line, and that the men composing it were deserving of far more honor than ever was officially or publicly accorded them, is, I believe, an acknowledged fact among all those most familiar with its history.

While some of the party were government officials, the exploration was undertaken by each civilian member of it purely in his private and individual capacity. A quasi-official cast was given to it, however, by the facts that a small escort of United States cavalry under command of Lieut. Gustavus C. Doane was provided by the government, upon request, and that Lieutenant Doane made an official report of the exploration to the War Department. This report, together with Mr. Langford's published diary, constitute descriptive literature of the exploration and region that has never since been surpassed, and indeed has been seldom, perhaps never, equalled.

Fate is a stern and inexorable mistress. She doeth whatsoever she will, and we may but rarely modify or change her decrees. Call it what one pleases, fate, destiny, or Providence, little did any one imagine that on that 16th day of June, 1862, when the Fisk Overland Expedition left St. Paul for the Salmon river mines in the heart of the Rockies, with Nathaniel P. Langford as one of its officers and members, a trail was being followed by

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him that led ultimately to a new and great departure in national conservation and general recreation.

We were then in the midst of our great Civil War, and the heavy westward emigration that followed that period of strife was yet to come. The western frontier, now almost an iridescent dream, was, even if an imaginary and intangible line, yet a very real one, and it then lay, virtually, along the valley of the Missouri river.

What a wonderful, changeable thing that old frontier was! Like the ever shifting sands of its own deserts or the tremulous and deceitful mirage of its vast plains, it too was ever shifting, ever moving. And after the Civil War, when the hegira from the east began, how rapidly it changed position and marked the gradual extinction of barbarism, the steady advance of civilization, as "westward the course of empire takes its way."

And now it has utterly and forever vanished. The waste places are filled, the deserts are replaced by grain and alfalfa fields and orchards; irrigation is an evangel of progress and prosperity; the Indians and buffalo in their untamed wildness have disappeared; the story of the "Pony Express" reads like fiction; and the Daniel Boones and Kit Carsons, the Jim Bridgers and Bozemans, the Joe Meeks and Charlie Reynoldses have gone,—because there is no longer a place for them.

In the elimination of that old frontier and the transformation which has been effected, our late friend, Councilor, and President, although he knew it not, was cast by Fate, or by Providence, to bear a most noteworthy and honorable part. I can almost imagine that as he toiled over the long weary miles across the sweeping plains and through the mountains on that slow, winding trek in '62, the prairie flowers and grasses nodded and whispered to themselves in great excitement and the tall pines made dignified discourse as he passed, anent the great discovery by which he with others was in a few short years to startle the country and the world.

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It was late in the fall when, after traveling 1,600 miles in eighteen weeks, he reached Grasshopper creek, the Willard's creek of Lewis and Clark, and established himself there for the winter as comfortably as was possible, 400 miles from a post office or settlement. They named the place Bannack, not Bannock, after the Bannack tribe of Indians. Placer gold had been discovered there, gold seekers flocked in, and the town became the first capital of Montana, when the latter was organized as a territory in 1864. Several million dollars were added to the channels of western commerce from the Bannack placers in a few short years, and modern dredges are still wresting substantial values from the old time workings.

Mr. Langford here bore his share of hardships and severe labor during a very trying winter. And onward, for a series of about fourteen years, as an eminent citizen of Montana and much of the time a government official, he bore a conspicuous part in the shaping of the destinies of the new and youthful 634 commonwealth ordained by nature to become, possible, the greatest in the sisterhood of Northwestern states.

While it is as a great explorer and the successful expounder of a new idea in national policy that Mr. Langford is best known publicly, he bore an equally important and meritorious part in another matter of vital consequence to the peace, welfare, and credit of the new territory. I refer, of course, to the Vigilante method of law administration and enforcement.

It is difficult for an outsider to realize the cosmopolitan character of that early-day population. Along with honest, well meaning, hard-working men, intent upon making a good livelihood and perchance a fortune, there came, perhaps literally, from the ends of the earth, many of a distinctly opposite character. Adventurers of all sorts, thieves, thugs, fugitives from justice, outlaws, human riffraff from all over the West, poured into Bannack, Alder Gulch, and the other Montana mining camps, as rapidly as they were established, intent upon luxuriously rioting in sin and violence where courts and constabulary were lacking. Many of these road agents, as they were called, secretly banded together and had

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their spies, places of rendezvous, etc., scattered throughout the region. It finally became a serious question whether any man suspected of having gold dust, money, or valuables of any kind, could possibly journey safely from one place to another, be the distance long or short; and to incur the ill will of one of these men, from whatever cause, meant death. It is known that 102 persons were killed by these bandits, and there were undoubtedly many more.

To thwart the power of the road agents, the Vigilantes were finally compelled to organize secretly. As all law with us comes from the people, so it did here. It was a last and serious effort, a forlorn hope, to enforce actually the spirit and letter of the law, where the usual legal adjuncts were lacking. It was really the essence of law, devoid of its technical forms and processes.

A quotation from a biographical sketch of Hon. Hezekiah L. Hosmer, the first Chief Justice of the Territory of Montana, published in Volume III of the Montana Historical Society Contributions, is pertinent at this point:

The attraction had brought those who came to work, and those 635 who came to profit by the labor of others. Had the convicts liberated on the approach of Napoleon, on the condition that they burn Moscow, been thrown en masse into the new settlements east of the mountains, it could not have been worse than it was with the crowd that entered and undertook to control Bannack and Virginia City in the years 1862 and 1863.

Self liberty and self preservation made men who regarded laws as necessary attendants upon happiness, heroes in those troublous times. And with a community nearly equally divided between law abiding men and roughs, determination finally brought the desperado to the gallows and made life at least worth the living.

By the Vigilantes, order was restored, and all, from the highwayman to the petty pilferer from the sluice boxes or miners' cabins, knew by the spring of 1864 that if they valued their

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lives, honesty was not only a virtue, but a necessity. In this way the effect of a well studied criminal law was reached in the early winter of 1864.

The men subjected to the judgments of the Vigilantes were promptly but impartially tried, as they were previously by the miners' courts, without, however, the trifling and petty delays of the law so often now as even then experienced, and the decrees were promptly executed.

Judge Hosmer reached Virginia City in the fall of 1864. He was from northern Ohio, a lawyer and journalist of ability and reputation. Literature was his pastime and delight, and he was a man who seems to have been well equipped in every way for the time, place, and peculiar exigencies of the situation. I quote again from the biography referred to:

Upon the opening of the court a Grand Jury was impanelled, to which Judge Hosmer gave a charge prepared upon the then existing state of society. He, among other matters, reviewed the history of the two preceding years, the establishment of order by the aid of the Vigilance Committee, approved its action as a necessity, but counseled, as the courts were established, that summary proceedings should give way to the law. The charge was met with approval by the bar, and by request it was published.

As soon as lawful officials and courts thus made their appearance, in 1864, and the regular legal machinery was set in motion, the Vigilantes voluntarily ceased to exist, and this fact is the best argument for the righteousness of the movement.

The principal centers at which the organization was active were Bannack and Virginia City, although there were branch organizations at Last Chance and Confederate gulches. Under the domination of the Vigilantes the desperadoes were hung or banished, crime was actually and swiftly punished, life and property were rendered safe, and society was rescued from a state of anarchy. Some of the best citizens of the territory were Vigilantes. Among them were Col. Wilbur F. Sanders, a leader among leaders and afterward United States Senator from Montana; Samuel T. Hauser, subsequently

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Governor of Montana; Judge Walter B. Dance; N. P. Langford, and others of equal prominence and standing. Deeds of bravery, equally if not more daring than those seen on the battlefield, were performed by some of these men. Both the moral and physical courage that were displayed by Beachy, Sanders, Howie, Featherstone, X. Beidler, and others, are enrolled upon the scroll of history and will never be forgotten by the old Montana pioneers or their successors. The State would honor itself as well as them by sometime erecting a suitable monument to these men.

Mr. Langford himself, happily, in the Introduction to his "Vigilante Days and Ways," a most valuable chronicle of the time of which it treats, has presented a statement of facts and of arguments justifying the Vigilante methods, that is impartial, honest, cogent, forceful, and convincing to an open and discriminating mind. Honor and praise, instead of adverse criticism, are due those men, and no apologies are necessary for what they did and dared. I quote from the Introduction alluded to:

The truth of the adage that "Crime carries with it its own punishment" has never received a more powerful vindication than at the tribunals erected by the people of the North-West mines for their own protection. No sadder commentary could have stained our civilization than to permit the numerous and bloody crimes committed in the early history of this portion of our country to go unwhipped of justice. And the fact that they were promptly and thoroughly dealt with stands among the earliest and noblest characteristics of a people which derived their ideas of right and of self-protection from that spirit of the law that flows spontaneously from our free institutions. The people bore with crime until punishment became a duty and neglect a crime. Then, at infinite hazard of failure, they entered upon the work of purgation with a strong hand, and in the briefest possible time established the supremacy of law. The robbers and murderers of the mining regions, so long defiant of the claims of peace and safety, were made to hold the gibbet in greater terror there than in any other portion of our country.

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Up to this time, fear of punishment had exercised no restraining influence on the conduct of men who had organized murder and robbery into a steady pursuit. They hesitated at no atrocity necessary to accomplish their guilty designs. Murder with them was resorted to as the most available means of concealing robbery, and the two crimes were generally coincident. The country, filled with canyons, gulches, and mountain passes, was especially adapted to their purposes, and the unpeopled distances between mining camps afforded ample opportunity for carrying them into execution. Pack trains and companies, stage coaches and express messengers, were as much exposed as the solitary traveller, and often selected as objects of attack. Miners, who had spent months of hard labor in the placers in the accumulation of a few hundreds of dollars, were never heard of after they left the mines to return to their distant homes. Men were daily and nightly robbed and murdered in the camps. There was no limit to this system of organized brigandage.

When not engaged in robbery, this criminal population followed other disreputable pursuits. Gambling and licentiousness were the most conspicuous features of every mining camp, and both were but other species of robbery. Worthless women taken from the stews of cities plied their vocation in open day, and their bagnios were the lures where many men were entrapped for robbery and slaughter. Dance-houses sprung up as if by enchantment, and every one who sought an evening's recreation in them was in some way relieved of the money he took there. Many good men who dared to give expression to the feelings of horror and disgust which these exhibitions inspired, were shot down by some member of the gang on the first opportunity. For a long time these acts were unnoticed, for the reason that the friends of law and order supposed the power of evil to be in the ascendant. Encouraged by this impunity the ruffian power increased in audacity, and gave utterance to threats against all that portion of the community which did not belong to its organization. An issue involving the destruction of the good or bad element actually existed at the time that the people entered upon the work of punishment.

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I offer these remarks, not in vindication of all the acts of the vigilantes, but of so many of them as were necessary to establish the safety and protection of the people. The reader will find among the later acts of some of the individuals claiming to have exercised the authority of the vigilantes some executions of which he cannot approve. For these persons I can offer no apology. Many of these were worse men than those they executed. Some were hasty and inconsiderate, and while firm in the belief they were doing right, actually committed grievous offences. Unhappily for the vigilantes, the acts of these men have been recalled to justify an opinion abroad, prejudicial to the vigilante organization. Nothing could be more unjust. The early vigilantes were the best and most intelligent men in the mining regions. They saw and felt that, in the absence of all law, they must become a "law unto themselves," or submit to the bloody code of the banditti by which they were surrounded, and which was increasing in numbers more rapidly than themselves. Every man among them realized from the first the great delicacy and care necessary in the management of a society which assumed the right to condemn to death a fellowman. And they now refer to the history of all those men who suffered death by their decree as affording ample justification for the severity of their acts. What else could they do? How else were their own lives and property, and the lives and property of the great body of peaceable miners in the placers to be preserved? What other protection was there for a country entirely destitute of law?

Let those who would condemn these men try to realize how they would act under similar circumstances, and they will soon find everything to approve and nothing to condemn in the transactions of the early vigilantes....

... And when the vigilantes of Montana entered upon their work, they did not know how soon they might have to encounter a force numerically greater than their own.

In my view the moral of this history is a good one. The brave and faithful conduct of the vigilantes furnishes an example of American character, from a point of view entirely new. We know what our countrymen were capable of doing when exposed to Indian massacre.

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We have read history after history recording the sufferings of early pioneers in the East, South, and West, but what they would do when surrounded by robbers and assassins, who were in all civil aspects like themselves, it has remained for the first settlers of the North Western mines to tell. And that they did their work well, and showed in every act a love for law, order, and for the moral and social virtues in which they had been educated, and a regard for our free institutions, no one can doubt who rightly appreciates the motives which actuated them.

... The terror which popular justice inspired in the criminal population has never been forgotten. To this day crime has been less frequent in occurrence in Montana than in any other of the new territories, and no banded criminals have made that territory an abiding place.

The outline of conditions here presented, and the character of the men enrolled among the Vigilantes, afford ample excuse and justification for the existence of the organization. That these men exhibited a high order of moral courage and bravery, and performed a distinct and valuable service to the community, I never heard any one in Montana, familiar with those trying days, question. Doctrinaires and theorists, safely ensconced in habitations far from the scenes of action, may object to the course pursued and cavil at the reasoning that justified it. But to the straightforward, practical man, whose common sense gives him to see the situation in true perspective and as it actually existed, the means adopted to restore law and order to their high and lofty pedestal among a sore stricken people, and to enforce respect for, and obedience to, their edicts, will appeal to him as entirely righteous and proper. It was indeed a condition, and a grievous one, not a theory, that confronted those heroic souls; and it was met in the only possible and effective way, by stern, unrelenting, yet impartial, action. Soothing syrup methods of coercion were worse than useless. All honor to Sanders, Langford, Howie, and their associates, for the example set those who came after them.

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While a resident of Montana, Mr. Langford served the government in several official positions, notably those of Collector of Internal Revenue and National Bank Examiner. In pursuance of his official and other duties, he traveled over a great part of the Northwest, and made the acquaintance of many individuals in all walks of life, and of all varieties of character common to western life of that period.

Among those whom he thus came to know and with whom he had business relations, was one noted in the annals of the West. I refer to James, or, as he was commonly known, "Jim" Bridger, the trapper and mountaineer, a guide of national reputation. Bridger was a unique product of a unique time, a diamond in the rough. Uncouth, illiterate to the extent of being unable even to write his name, he was, notwithstanding, one of the most remarkable men of our western history, within certain limits. A man of great endurance, he had explored wide areas, was the discoverer of Great Salt Lake, was familiar with what is now Yellowstone Park, and had served the government time and again as guide and hunter. He was a natural (a born) topographer and explorer of most exceptional ability, and had an imagination that, crude as he was, would do credit to a Munchausen. This he used upon occasion with telling effect and to the discomfiture of many an unwary individual.

Through Bridger and his marvelous tales and also from other sources, Mr. Langford with others became interested in the geysers, hot springs, and the beautiful lakes that were said to exist on the head waters of the Yellowstone river. For several successive years he and his friends planned to explore the 640 region, but the danger from Indians each time forced the abandonment of the enterprise.

In 1869 one of the party, Hon. David E. Folsom, refused to be longer frightened from their purpose. With two companions, C. W. Cook and William Peterson, the latter employed on Folsom's ranch, he that year visited the region and returned in safety. So fearful was he that his tale would be disbelieved, that he was extremely reticent and diffident in telling about what he found there. He did, however, write an account of their experience that was published in the Western Monthly of Chicago; and to his intimate friends, including Mr.

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Langford, he imparted a full knowledge of that marvelous locality. This but whetted the appetites of the others and determined them at all hazards to attempt the long deferred exploration of the region. The party proper, as finally organized at Helena, consisted of nine civilians, with two white packers and two colored cooks as assistants. The principals in this resultful and historic expedition deserve more than passing notice, and I add here Mr. Langford's characterization of them:

I question if there was ever a body of men organized for an exploring expedition, more intelligent or more keenly alive to the risks to be encountered.

Gen. Henry D. Washburn was the surveyor general of Montana and had been brevetted a major general for services in the Civil War, and had served two terms in the Congress of the United States. Judge Cornelius Hedges was a distinguished and highly esteemed member of the Montana bar. Samuel T. Hauser was a civil engineer, and was president of the First National Bank of Helena. He was afterwards appointed governor of Montana by Grover Cleveland. Warren C. Gillette and Benjamin Stickney were pioneer merchants in Montana. Walter Trumbull was assistant assessor of internal revenue, and a son of United States Senator Lyman Trumbull of Illinois. Truman C. Everts was assessor of internal revenue for Montana, and Nathaniel P. Langford had been for nearly five years the United States collector of internal revenue for Montana, and had been appointed governor of Montana by Andrew Johnson, but, owing to the imbroglio of the Senate with Johnson, his appointment was not confirmed.

At the very last moment, James Stuart, one of the prime movers in the exploration, was drawn for jury service in the federal court and prevented from going. Stuart was a man of 641 unusual force and decision of character, a splendid mountaineer and explorer, versed in all the trickery of the Indian, and he had been counted upon as the leader of the party. His failure to go with them was a distinct loss and a keen disappointment to all.

General Washburn was chosen as leader and the party left Helena on August 17, 1870.

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At Fort Ellis, near Bozeman, through a previous arrangement made by Washburn and Langford with General Hancock in command of the military department, a small cavalry escort of one sergeant and four privates was procured. This escort was, as previously stated, under command of Lieut. G. C. Doane, a man of supreme attainments for his task. Because of that fact and the ability and fidelity with which he performed his mission, his name has become so indelibly linked with the expedition that it is now very generally known as the Washburn-Doane Party or Expedition.

When the party finally broke clear from civilization and boldly launched forth into an almost unknown wilderness, it consisted, in its entirety, of nineteen persons. Of this large number four alone kept journals of what was destined to become a historic exploration. These were General Washburn, Lieutenant Doane, Judge Hedges, and Mr. Langford.

The diary of General Washburn was very concise, dealing but meagerly with the details of the trip. That of Lieutenant Doane was very full and complete and was published by the government. It deservedly ranks as a classic in descriptive literature, and will endure as long as the park itself does. Judge Hedges' journal was much longer and more detailed than was that of Washburn, but it was not as exhaustive as that of Doane. It was written for the private use of Judge Hedges alone, and not with the least expectation of its publication; but it was, fortunately, finally printed in 1904 in Volume V of "Contributions to the Historical Society of Montana." The diary of Mr. Langford was by far the most complete record history of the exploration, from every point of view, and like Doane's report it was a masterpiece of descriptive narrative. It was published by Mr. Langford in the year 1905, in a book of 122 pages, with many portraits and other illustrations, and with an introduction 41 642 of 32 pages. This book, entitled "Diary of the Washburn Expedition to the Yellowstone and Firehole Rivers in the Year 1870," should form a part of the library of every man who has any interest in the physical grandeur of his country.

If to any single member of the party could be accorded the name of diarist or historian of the exploration, the honor would unquestionably fall to our late friend and associate. The

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three journals of Langford, Doane, and Hedges, form an imperishable trinity of descriptive literature and history of the exploration and establishment of the first National Park by the general government.

Of the ten principal members of the party, seven are now dead, those now surviving being Ex-Governor Hauser, Mr. Gillette, and Mr. Stickney. General Washburn was the first, and Mr. Langford the last one to pass away. Mr. Hauser and Mr. Gillette still reside in Montana; Mr. Stickney is living in Florida.

I have conversed innumerable times with Mr. Langford, and I also interviewed Judge Hedges several times, regarding this exploration. These conversations forcibly impressed me with the modesty and fairness of both these men regarding the part each member of the party played in the conduct of the expedition. There was not the slightest attempt at self laudation on the one hand, nor of dispraise of any other member on the other hand. I long since came to the conclusion that in its personnel this exploring party was highly favored by Providence. The individuals composing it were congenial, high minded gentlemen, who worked together harmoniously and without one serious, violent outbreak or altercation, so far as I have ever ascertained, although at times all were sorely tried. Under the circumstances, as I know from similar personal experience, this is a most creditable record, which, I think, may fairly be called remarkable.

After leaving Bozeman and Fort Ellis, the trail traveled led the party across the Belt range of mountains, about ten or twelve miles south of where Captain Clark, of the Lewis and Clark expedition, crossed them in 1806. The pass that Clark used is the one by which the Northern Pacific railway now crosses the range, known as Bozeman pass, in honor of John M. 643 Bozeman, an early Montana pioneer and a contemporary of Bridger. After crossing the divide, the trail followed down Trail creek into the valley of the Yellowstone. They continued up the west side of the beautiful valley of that stream to where Gardiner, the official entrance to the park, now is situated at the mouth of Gardiner river, where they made one of their camps. Thence they followed an Indian trail parallel to the Yellowstone

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river to the Grand Canyon and Yellowstone lake. Before reaching the lake, they crossed to the east side of the Yellowstone at the ford near Mud Volcano, the same ford which Chief Joseph used when escaping from General Howard in 1878. They circled the east and south sides of Yellowstone lake, and then struck across the continental divide to the Firehole branch of the Madison river, which they followed through the Upper and Lower Geyser Basins back to the Montana settlements. The Madison river trail is also the one by which Chief Joseph and General Howard entered the confines of the park during their memorable retreat and pursuit.

That the fears of the party regarding the danger from roving bands of Indians were not unfounded, was proved at the very outset of the journey. Immediately upon descending into the valley of the Yellowstone, Crow Indians were discovered in considerable number. The lodge-pole trail of the Crows was followed for several days, and their smoke signals were seen on the hills. Great vigilance was, naturally, exercised both day and night, but no actual encounter occurred. The size of the party undoubtedly proved its safety. At Tower Fall the Indians crossed to the east side of the Yellowstone river, and although guards continued to be stationed at night no more Indians were seen.

Upon leaving Helena the expedition had laid in a supply of provisions for thirty days. It was thirty-eight days after leaving that city before Mr. Langford, the first one of the party to re-enter it, again saw it. While still detained around Yellowstone lake, their staple provisions, sugar, coffee, flour, etc., ran perilously low, and they were put upon short rations. Before reaching the geyser basins, they were able to provide themselves quite plentifully with venison, grouse, and antelope. Trout were abundant at the all times, so much so that while encamped 644 at the lake, as a measure of precaution they caught and dried several hundred pounds to supplement their impoverished larder.

In a company where practically all were equals, were men of enduring qualities, and who bore themselves in true, manly fashion, invidious distinctions are not easily possible nor desirable. It may be said, however, that a reading of the journals will show that Mr.

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Langford was easily one of the leading figures in the exploration. Strong, physically and mentally, capable of advising wisely and enduring great labor and hardship, naturally industrious and not given to shirking his share of responsibility, of a temper that could withstand severe strains upon its equanimity, he was admirably fitted for leadership in an enterprise such as this. While General Washburn was the titular leader and as such filled the position in a manner beyond criticism, there was a rare and beautiful goodfellowship existing and several others, including particularly Mr. Langford, virtually shared the honors of leadership with General Washburn.

It must be remembered that this region was, in all seriousness, a terra incognita to every one of these explorers, and they were following a very blind wilderness trail. The objective point of the expedition was Yellowstone lake, a large body of water known to be at a very high altitude somewhere among the labyrinths of the mountains. Upon arriving at what is now Tower Fall, nothing had been seen of such a body of water from any of the elevations ascended, and some of the party were becoming much concerned as to their own whereabouts. While encamped at the fall, General Washburn one day ascended a high, sloping mountain to the south, and from its wind-swept, rounded summit, to which a finely engineered carriage road now winds, he descried the beautiful lake, the object of their quest, reposing in its mountain basin "twenty miles away." This was a most cheering discovery, and, despite a recently formed resolution not to affix the name of any member of the party to any object of interest discovered, so rejoiced were they all at the tidings of General Washburn, that the peak was spontaneously and unanimously named Mt. Washburn, and as such it is known today.

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General Washburn (and also others of the party in fact) was more or less broken by the hardships suffered on this trip, and he died on January 26, 1871, following the return of the explorers to civilization. As showing the beautiful harmony that prevailed in the party

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and the esteem in which General Washburn was held by them, I quote from a memorial address by Mr. Hedges in Helena on January 29, 1871:

On the west bank of the Yellowstone ... a mighty sentinel, overlooking that region of wonders, rises in its serene and solitary grandeur,—Mount Washburn,—pointing the way his enfranchised spirit was soon to soar. He was the first to climb its bare, bald summit, and thence reported to us the welcome news that he saw the beautiful lake that had been the proposed object of our journey. By unanimous voice, unsolicited by him, we gave the mountain a name that through coming years shall bear on ward the memory of our gallant, generous leader. How little we then thought that he would be the first to live only in memory.

At the Grand Canyon the explorers camped on Cascade creek near Crystal fall, both so aptly named by Mr. Hedges. They were most profoundly impressed, as thousands have been since, by the majesty, beauty, and grandeur of their surroundings.

As indicating the impressions made upon Mr. Langford, individually, and to show the dignity, power, and literary style of his narrative, I give two or three excerpts from his journal descriptive of the Grand Canyon and the falls. Under date of August 31, he wrote:

This has been a “red-letter” day with me, and one which I shall not soon forget, for my mind is clogged and my memory confused by what I have today seen. General Washburn and Mr. Hedges are sitting near me, writing, and we have an understanding that we will compare our notes when finished. We are all overwhelmed with astonishment and wonder at what we have seen, and we feel that we have been near the very presence of the Almighty. General Washburn has just quoted from the psalm:

“When I behold the work of Thy hands, what is man that Thou art mindful of him?”

My own mind is so confused that I hardly know where to commence in making a clear record of what is at this moment floating past my mental vision. I cannot confine myself

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to a bare description of the falls of the Yellowstone alone, for these two great cataracts are but one feature in a scene composed of so many of the elements of grandeur and sublimity, that I almost despair of giving to those who on our return home will listen to a recital of our adventures, the faintest conception of it. The immense canyon or gorge of rocks through which the river descends, perhaps more than the falls, is calculated to fill the observer with feelings of mingled awe and terror. ... The stillness is horrible, and the solemn grandeur of the scene surpasses conception. You feel the absence of sound—the oppression of absolute silence. Down, down, down, you see the river attenuated to a thread. If you could only hear that gurgling river, lashing with puny strength the massive walls that imprison it and hold it in their dismal shadow, if you could but see a living thing in the depth beneath you, if a bird would but fly past you, if the wind would move any object in that awful chasm, to break for a moment the solemn silence which reigns there, it would relieve that tension of the nerves which the scene has excited, and with a grateful heart you would thank God that he had permitted you to gaze unharmed upon this majestic display of his handiwork. But as it is, the spirit of man sympathizes with the deep gloom of the scene, and the brain reels as you gaze into this profound and solemn solitude.

... As I took in this scene, I realized my own littleness, my helplessness, my dread exposure to destruction, my inability to cope with or even comprehend the mighty architecture of nature. More than all this I felt as never before my entire dependence upon that Almighty Power who had wrought these wonders.

Of the two glorious cataracts at the head of the canyon he wrote, in part:

The two grand falls of the Yellowstone form a fitting completion to this stupendous climax of wonders. They impart life, power, light and majesty to an assemblage of elements, which without them would be the most gloomy and horrible solitude in nature. Their eternal anthem, echoing from canyon, mountain, rock and woodland, thrills you with delight, and you gaze with rapture at the iris-crowned curtains of fleecy foam as they plunge into gulfs enveloped in mist and spray. The stillness which held your senses spell-bound, as you

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peered into the dismal depths of the canyon below, is now broken by the uproar of waters; the terror it inspired is superseded by admiration and astonishment, and the scene, late so painful from its silence and gloom, is now animate with joy and revelry.

The first camp at Yellowstone lake was on the north shore about two miles east of the outlet. Here we find Mr. Langford successfully assuming a new role, one that exhibited not only his versatility, but proved his value in emergencies. During the entire exploration thus far, Lieutenant Doane had suffered agonies from an obstinate felon. His sufferings had become so acute and even excruciating that relief must, in some way, be afforded, and we will let *Dr. Langford* tell the story of what followed:

Last evening Lieutenant Doane's sufferings were so intense that General Washburn and I insisted that he submit to an operation, and have the felon opened, and he consented provided I would administer chloroform. Preparations were accordingly made after supper. A box containing army cartridges was improvised as an operating table, and I engaged Mr. Bean, one of our packers, and Mr. Hedges as assistant surgeons. Hedges was to take his position at Doane's elbow, and was to watch my motion as I thrust in the knife blade, and hold the elbow and fore-arm firmly to prevent any involuntary drawing back of the arm by Lieutenant Doane, at the critical moment. When Doane was told that we were ready, he asked, "Where is the chloroform?" I replied that I had never administered it, and that after thinking the matter over I was afraid to assume the responsibility of giving it. He swallowed his disappointment, and turned his thumb over on the cartridge box, with the nail down. Hedges and Bean were on hand to steady the arm, and before one could say "Jack Robinson," I had inserted the point of my penknife, thrusting it down to the bone, and had ripped it out to the end of the thumb. Doane gave one shriek as the released corruption flew out in all directions upon surgeon and assistants, and then with a broad smile on his face he exclaimed, "That was elegant!" We then applied a poultice of bread and water, which we renewed a half hour later, and Doane at about eight o'clock last night

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dropped off into a seemingly peaceful sleep, which has been continuous up to the time of this writing, two o'clock p. m.

Lieutenant Doane had been nine days and nights without sleep, and he now slept continuously for thirty-six hours.

While encamped on the eastern shore of the lake, Lieutenant Doane and Mr. Langford climbed, with great exertion and difficulty, a high mountain close at hand and bordering the lake, in order to gain some idea of the country and to lay out a route for the future. They were four hours in reaching the summit, and while there Mr. Langford made a rough but very correct outline map of the lake. This was the first map ever drawn that gave anything like a correct representation of the peculiar shape and shore line of this body of water. It was used by General Washburn, as Surveyor General, as the copy, or model, for a map for the Interior Department at Washington, in whose archives, presumably, it still reposes.

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As an appropriate recognition of the services of Mr. Langford and Lieutenant Doane in making this laborious ascent and the map, General Washburn, with the hearty concurrence of his associates, named the peak they climbed, Mt. Langford, and the mountain just north of it, Mr. Doane. The one they ascended was, Mr. Langford states, "the most westerly peak" of the range, and it commanded a very extensive view. Doane pronounced it "the highest peak of the east range," that is, of the range on the eastern side of the lake.

In 1871 Dr. F. V. Hayden and his government survey visited the region, impelled thereto by the Washburn-Doane exploration of 1870, and his parties explored and mapped it. With an apparent total disregard for the facts, as stated, that seems utterly unjustifiable, he ignored the name Mr. Langford as applied to this peak, and gave it to a mountain far removed from this locality. Later, for some reason, apparently at least publicly unknown, but possibly by Hayden, the name was again changed to a peak near the original Mr.

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Langford, to which mountain Hayden, presumably, gave the name Stevenson, after James Stevenson, a member of his own party, who may or may not have climbed it. The propriety and significance of applying the name Langford to the peak that Doane and Langford ascended, and from which they sketched the first map of the locality that, rough as it was, bore any semblance to accuracy, calls for no argument. As the matter now stands, the name carries little or no significance. Apparently, Dr. Hayden inexcusably ignored the prior and just rights of a previous brother explorer, endeavoring later, possibly, to make amends for it by bringing the name back to that locality.

I suggest that, as these three peaks, Stevenson, Langford, and Doane, as now named, are very near together, it would not be difficult even now wholly to rectify this injustice and properly and sensibly to readjust these names. A determined effort by the Minnesota Historical Society, in conjunction with the Montana Historical Society and perhaps other appropriate organizations, could probably accomplish this object. And what a graceful and appropriate action and tribute it would be if these societies, to which Mr. Langford was so closely related, could accomplish this result!

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While, one day, the expedition was making its way with greatest difficulty through the tangled mass of brush and fallen timber that encumbered the route, Mr. Langford's keen sense of the ludicrous saved a rather serious situation and changed the entire aspect of affairs.

Those of us who have endeavored to work a pack train through almost impassable obstacles of this sort, know how it tries men's souls. On this particular occasion patience as well as physical strength had become exhausted, the tempers of all were strained to the breaking point, and an ugly spirit predominated. At the opportune time, or as I ought now to say, I suppose, the psychological moment, Mr. Langford, in a highly affected and mock heroic style, recited these beautiful lines from Byron, found in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*:

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"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods; There is a rapture on the lonely shore; There is society, where none intrudes, By the deep sea, and music in its roar: I love not man the less, but Nature more."

The effect of this pompous style of declamation, amid such doleful and lugubrious surroundings, was instantaneous and may easily be imagined. All burst into unrestrained laughter, the tension was quickly relaxed, the atmosphere was cleared, and anger and sullenness gave way to good feeling and congeniality.

All mountaineers and explorers know well that there is nothing in the world that so tries a man's patience and develops, on the one hand, the mean, selfish, ignoble attributes, or, on the other hand, the noble and unselfish qualities in a man,—in a word, nothing that so quickly and unfailingly brings to the surface the real nature of an individual—as do the trials and difficulties inseparable from just such a journey as the one in which the Washburn-Doane party were engaged. Their progress around Yellowstone lake was peculiarly aggravating and nerve-trying. An excerpt from Mr. Langford's diary at this time not only emphasizes this fact, but reveals most admirably the sterling character, the rugged honesty, the sound philosophy, the innate sweetness and nobility of spirit of the man himself. He records:

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I growled at Hauser and scolded him a little in camp tonight because of some exasperating action of his. I here record the fact without going into details. I think that I must try to be more patient. But I am feeling somewhat the fatigue of our journey. However, there is something to be said on the other hand, and that is that there is no one of the party better able to bear its labors and anxieties than I, and therefore I should be the last man to lose my patience.

I know of nothing that can try one's patience more than a trip of any considerable length by wagon train or pack train through an uninhabited region, and the most amiable of

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our race cannot pass this ordeal entirely unscathed. Persons who are not blessed with uncommon equanimity never get through such a journey without frequent explosions of temper, and seldom without violence. Even education, gentle training and the sharpest of mental discipline, do not always so effectually subdue the passions that they may not be aroused into unwonted fury during a long journey through a country filled with obstructions. Philosophy has never found a fitter subject for its exercise than that afforded by the journey we are now making, which obliges the members of our party to strive to relieve each other's burdens.

In order that an erroneous impression of Governor Hauser may not be conveyed by this quotation, I submit one more written at about the same time, referring to an intensely practical joke played on him by Mr. Langford and Judge Hedges during a night on which they stood guard.

Mr. Hauser ... had expected to have a dainty breakfast, but he is himself too fond of a practical joke to express any disappointment, and no one in the party is more unconcerned at the outcome than he. He is a philosopher, and, as I know from eight years' association with him, does not worry over the evils which he can remedy, nor those which he cannot remedy. There can be found no better man than he for such a trip as we are making.

Another excerpt will convey a vivid impression of what those of us who have enjoyed the luxury of travel with pack trains, have experienced on trails grievously obstructed by down timber. This experience was also among the mountains bordering Yellowstone lake.

We broke camp this morning with the pack train at 10 o'clock, traveling in a westerly course for about two miles, when we gradually veered around to a nearly easterly direction, through fallen timber almost impassable in the estimation of pilgrims, and indeed pretty severe on our pack horses, for there was no trail, and, while our saddle horses with their riders could manage to force their way through 651 between the trees, the packs on the pack animals would frequently strike the trees, holding the animals fast or compelling

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them to seek some other passage. Frequently, we were obliged to re-arrange the packs and narrow them, so as to admit of their passage between the standing trees. At one point the pack animals became separated, and with the riding animals of a portion of the party were confronted with a prostrate trunk of a huge tree, about four feet in diameter, around which it was impossible to pass because of the obstructions of fallen timber. Yet pass it we must; and the animals, one after another, were brought up to the log, their breasts touching it, when Williamson and I, the two strongest men of the party, on either side of an animal, stooped down, and, placing each a shoulder back of a fore leg of a horse, rose to an erect position, while others of the party placed his fore feet over the log, which he was thus enabled to scale. In this way we lifted fifteen or twenty of our animals over the log.

Friday, September 9, 1870, was a day and date seared upon the minds and memories of every member of the expedition. It was the same day on which occurred the "horse lifting" incident just recorded.

After a day of soul-trying and exhausting experiences in the fallen timber lodged on the hillsides, they camped that afternoon on the western, the Pacific, slope of the Continental Divide. The tremendous obstacles to their progress may be judged from the fact that their camp, on a small affluent stream of the Snake river, was but three miles from their last camp, and the circuitous distance traveled was but six miles.

These words, from Mr. Langford's journal, "Mr. Everts has not yet come into camp, and we fear that he is lost," prefigure an experience in that gentleman's life that contained all the elements of an awful tragedy. That, at the last moment, it was saved from becoming a complete and lamentable tragedy, is it too much to say, was owing to the ever watchful and loving care of a Divine Providence that so often guides our footsteps? Some may question this, many will firmly believe it to be the only possible solution.

Mr. Everts was, indeed, lost! In the absence of any real, defined trail in the tangled timber, he with the others was continually winding hither and thither seeking a route that

would lead them onward. In some manner while thus engaged he became confused and separated from his comrades, and his absence was not noted until camp was made.

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Mr. Everts was not seen again for thirty-seven days, when he was found by two mountaineers on the summit of a mountain in the neighborhood of Yancey's, west of that point and north of Mt. Washburn. These mountain men were sent in search of Everts by the Washburn-Doane explorers after their return to civilization. Everts, when found, was entirely exhausted and partially deranged through starvation, exposure, and suffering. On the very first day of his absence, his horse, left standing and unfastened, with all the man's arms and camp equipments attached, became frightened and ran away and was never afterward seen. Everts was near-sighted, had not even a knife for use or defense, and only a field-glass to assist him in escaping. He at first managed to reach Heart lake, one of the sources of Snake river. Here he remained for twelve days, sleeping close by the hot springs to keep from freezing. His food was thistle roots, boiled in the springs. One night he was forced into a tree by a mountain lion and kept there all night. Finally he bethought himself of the lenses of his field-glasses, and thus was enabled to kindle fires. He wandered all along the western side of the lake and down the Yellowstone river to where he was providentially found. He gave the story of his terrible experience in the old Scribner's Magazine, since become the Century Magazine, and a thrilling tale it makes.

In a country filled with a network of streams, abundantly supplied with animal life for food, gorged with timber for fuel, the man nearly froze, and starved, and almost perished from thirst. Twice he was five days without food, and once three days without water. It was late in the season, and the storms swept down on him and chilled him to the bone; the snows kept him prisoner in camp, or when on his painful marches blocked his progress. He became weaker and weaker. For several days toward the end of his wanderings, a large mountain lion followed his trail to feast on him when he should at last drop exhausted. When it finally seemed as if hope must be given up, and life also, he was providentially found, and was carefully nursed back to health. His escape borders on the miraculous.

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The large plateau, known as Mt. Everts, just east of Mammoth Hot Springs, was named for Everts on the mistaken assumption that he was found on its summit.

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The journal for September 11 relates a not infrequent but always startling experience:

We were roused this morning about 2 o'clock by the shrill howl of a mountain lion, and again while we were at breakfast we heard another yell. As we stood around our camp-fire tonight, our ears were saluted with a shriek so terribly human, that for a moment we believed it to be a call from Mr. Everts, and we halloosed in response, and several of our party started in the direction whence the sounds came, and would have instituted a search for our comrade but for an admonitory growl of a mountain lion.

One who has ever heard the peculiar, childlike cry of one of these beasts, will never forget it, nor the terrifying effect it instinctively produces. Fortunately for those who in these days now and then break away from the established routes of travel in the park and penetrate the remoter and untraveled wilds by horseback and pack train, there are few of these animals now found there. The government has strenuously hunted them down to prevent their preying on the elk, antelopes, and deer, which are steadily increasing.

From September 11 to 16 the party remained at their camp on the southwest arm of the lake. The utmost anxiety prevailed regarding Mr. Everts. By twos, following the old scriptural injunction, they went forth day by day in all directions, searching for the unfortunate wanderer, but not the slightest trace of him or his horse was ever found by them.

The solicitude regarding Everts, and one reason for it, are thus voiced:

I had a good nap this afternoon ... and I feel greatly refreshed. My first thought on awakening was for poor Everts. I wonder where he can be throughout all this fierce storm and deep snow? Perhaps the snow did not reach him, for I noticed tonight that the ground

was quite bare on the opposite side of this arm of the lake, while the snow is eight or ten inches deep here at our camp. ... Each night that we have been camped here we have heard the shrill cries of the mountain lions, and under a momentary illusion I have each time been half convinced that it was a human being in distress. Because of the mountain lions we are keeping close watch upon our horses. They are very fond of horse flesh, and oftentimes will follow a horseman a long distance, more to make a meal upon the flesh of the horse than for the purpose of attacking the rider.

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One, at least, of these explorers was not so beset by the manifold cares and anxieties, the labors and fatigues that encompassed them, as not to foresee in his mind's eye with remarkably clear and unclouded vision, the real purport and ultimate importance of the exploration to which they had so unreservedly given themselves. This is evidenced by this excerpt from the diary of September 14, written at their next to the last camp on the lake, the one from which they conducted the search for Everts. It also draws a picture of some features of their camp life that is interesting.

We have remained in camp all day, as it is next to impossible to move. The snow is nearly two feet deep, and is very wet and heavy, and our horses are pawing in it for forage. Our large army tent is doing us good service, and, as there is an abundance of dry wood close by our camp, we are extremely comfortable. I am the only one of the party who has a pair of water-proof boots, and I was up and out of the tent this morning before daylight cutting into cordwood a pine log, and before noon I had more than a half cord at the tent door. Wash-burn and Hauser offered to do some of this work if I would loan them my water-proof boots; but, as they are of a full size for me, and would probably drop off of their feet, I told them that I would get the wood.

Lieutenant Doane today requested me to loan him this diary from which to write up his records, as the condition of his thumb has interfered with his use of a pen or pencil. I have

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accordingly loaned it to him, and Private Moore has been busy the greater part of the day copying portions of it.

For myself, I am very glad to have a day of rest, for I have felt much wearied for several days. I think that I am certainly within bounds when I say that I have put in sixteen hours a day of pretty hard work, attending to camp duties, and writing each day till late at night, and I realize that this journal of travel is becoming ponderous. Yet there is daily crowded upon my vision so much of novelty and wonder, which should be brought to the notice of the world, and which, so far as my individual effort is concerned, will be lost to it if I do not record the incidents of each day's travel, that I am determined to make my journal as full as possible, and to purposely omit no details. It is a lifetime opportunity for publishing to all who may be interested, a complete record of the discoveries of an expedition which in coming time will rank among the first and most important of American explorations.

That Mr. Langford was able at this time to pen the preceding statement concerning the importance of the exploration and its discoveries, exhibited a prescience and an accuracy in 655 judging results, that are very surprising. It must be borne in mind that the party did not at any time see or know of Mammoth Hot Springs and its beautiful terraces, the Golden Gate, the canyon and fall of the Middle Gardiner river, Obsidian Cliff, Norris Geyser Basin, Gibbon fall and canyon, and other remarkable objects, which now so delight thousands annually. Neither had they at this time seen a single geyser, that particular class of phenomena that renders the region so unique and distinguishes it, more than any other, from other wonder spots of the globe. Nevertheless the instinct was unerring and the prognostication a true one.

The last camp in the Yellowstone Lake region was made at the West Arm or Thumb, as it is also termed, where the lunch station on the lake is now located. It was on open ground, and the relief at emerging from the gloom and intricacies of the forest was inexpressible. Mr. Langford, from the depths of that tenacious memory that we all knew so well, recited

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to Hauser and Washburn the following lines from "The Task," by Cowper, as "at once expressive of our experience in the journey around the lake and of our present relief."

"As one who long in thickets and in brakes Entangled, winds now this way and now that, His devious course uncertain, seeking home; Or having long in miry ways been foiled And sore discomfited, from slough to slough Plunging, and half despairing of escape; If chance at length he finds a greensward smooth And faithful to the foot, his spirits rise, He chirrup brisks his ear-erecting steed, And winds his way with pleasure and with ease."

On September 17 they resumed their forward journey. So keen was their continued anxiety regarding Everts, however, that Mr. Gillette with two of the private soldiers was left behind the main party, and, with ten days' rations, these resumed the search for that unfortunate man. They were to return home by whatsoever route they chose.

Striking out again into the unknown with Mr. Hauser, a civil engineer of much experience, as topographer in chief, the main body crossed the Continental Divide, which at this point doubles back upon itself, twice, as the tourist of today does, camping that night on a small tributary creek of the Firehole river, and once more on the Atlantic slope. It was a camp of very tired men, who for the most part were greatly depressed. Upon crossing the Continental Divide the first time, they saw a large lake lying to the south. This occasioned a great deal of discussion, not alone as to what body of water it could be, but as to their whereabouts. With the exception of Hauser and Langford, all seemed sure that the lake was the source of the Firehole river. These two insisted that it was the source of the Snake river, and that the Firehole yet lay ahead of them, beyond the second crossing of the Divide, in which conjecture they were correct.

The lake was Shoshone lake, and from Shoshone Point the tourists of today catch a glimpse of it and overlook, beneath them, the heavily timbered low country across which the Washburn party struggled forward to the final crossing of the Continental Divide.

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And here let me digress for a brief moment. One of the conspicuous sights from Shoshone Point is the long distance view obtained, some fifty miles to the south, of the Three Tetons, or the Pilot Knobs, the name by which they were formerly known. These peaks are stern, rugged, and old-time landmarks. The principal and highest one, the Grand Teton, was first ascended to its extreme height, in 1872, by Nathaniel P. Langford and James Stevenson, the latter being of the Hayden survey.

Scribner's Magazine for June, 1873, published an account of this ascent, written by Mr. Langford. Not until 1898 was the summit of this peak again reached.

On September 18, the anxieties of the explorers as to their location were quickly set at rest, for within three miles after breaking camp they reached the Firehole river not far above Kepler cascade, and soon thereafter found themselves in the wonderful Upper Geyser Basin, the very heart of geyser land.

To say that they were delighted, astonished, mystified, awed, by what they saw here and in going to and through the Midway and Lower Geyser Basins, a distance of about twelve miles, is merely to state what all know could not have been otherwise. Mr. Langford's journal at this point exhibits an almost boyish exuberance and enthusiasm at the magnitude and strange nature of the phenomena discovered by them. One excerpt will suffice:

Near by is situated the "Giantess," the largest of all the geysers we saw in eruption. Ascending a gentle slope for a distance of sixty yards we came to a sink or well of an irregular oval shape, fifteen by twenty feet across, into which we could see to the depth of fifty feet or more, but could discover no water, though we could distinctly hear it gurgling and boiling at a fearful rate afar down this vertical cavern. Suddenly it commenced spluttering and rising with incredible rapidity, causing a general stampede among our company, who all moved around to the windward side of the geyser. When the water had risen within about twenty-five feet of the surface, it became stationary, and we returned to

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look down upon the foaming water, which occasionally emitted hot jets nearly to the mouth of the orifice. As if tired of this sport the water began to ascend at the rate of five feet in a second, and when near the top it was expelled with terrific momentum in a column the full size of the immense aperture to a height of sixty feet. The column remained at this height for the space of about a minute, when from the apex of this vast aqueous mass five lesser jets or round columns of water varying in size from six to fifteen inches in diameter shot up into the atmosphere to the amazing height of two hundred and fifty feet. This was without exception the most magnificent phenomenon I ever beheld. We were standing on the side of the geyser exposed to the sun, whose sparkling rays filled the ponderous column with what appeared to be the clippings of a thousand rainbows. These prismatic illusions disappeared, only to be succeeded by myriads of others which continually fluttered and sparkled through the spray during the twenty minutes the eruption lasted. These lesser jets, thrown so much higher than the main column and shooting through it, doubtless proceed from auxiliary pipes leading into the principal orifice near the bottom, where the explosive force is greater. The minute globules into which the spent column was diffused when falling sparkled like a shower of diamonds, and around every shadow produced by the column of steam hiding the sun was the halo so often represented in paintings as encircling the head of the Savior. We unhesitatingly agreed that this was the greatest wonder of our trip.

The party were more than fortunate in what they here saw. The mysterious, mystical spirits of the geyser world, seemingly forewarned in some secret manner, appear to have made special efforts to arrange an elaborate program of welcome and exhibition for them. In a stay of but twenty-two hours they saw twelve geysers in action, six of them among the very finest in the basin, including Old Faithful, Bee Hive, the Giant, and 42 658 Castle. If any party ever deserved such a *multum in parvo* reception and display, it was this one.

On the night of September 19, the explorers camped at the junction of the Firehole and Gibbon rivers. The bivouac at that spot has made it historic, for there the idea of establishing a National Park bloomed and blossomed forth in full flower and became

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a practical one. General H. M. Chittenden, retired, when Engineer in Charge of road construction, etc., in the park, very properly placed a large tablet at this point to commemorate that truth. To a high hill or salient at this point has also been given the name National Park Mountain.

The facts in regard to the origin of this idea and its final realization in the establishment of Yellowstone Park are not only of interest but of value historically. The story forms an important part of the one I am endeavoring to relate, for no man loomed more prominently in it than N. P. Langford. As one of its original promoters let Mr. Langford be also, at least in part, its historian. In his journal for September 20, he wrote:

Last night, and also this morning in camp, the entire party had a rather unusual discussion. The proposition was made by some member that we utilize the result of our exploration by taking up quarter sections of land at the most prominent points of interest, and a general discussion followed. One member of our party suggested that if there could be secured by pre-emption a good title to two or three quarter sections of land opposite the Lower Fall of the Yellowstone and extending down the river along the canyon, they would eventually become a source of great profit to the owners. Another member of the party thought that it would be more desirable to take up a quarter section of land at the Upper Geyser Basin, for the reason that that locality could be more easily reached by tourists and pleasure seekers. A third suggestion was that each member of the party pre-empt a claim, and in order that no one should have an advantage over the other, the whole should be thrown into a common pool for the benefit of the entire party. [Here Mr. Langford and the others appear to have formulated the original idea of a "trust" or "holding company," so popular in these latter days.]

Mr. Hedges then said he did not approve of any of these plans—that there ought to be no private ownership of any portion of that region, but that the whole of it ought to be set apart as a great National Park, and that each one of us ought to make an effort to have this accomplished. His suggestion met with an instantaneous and favorable response

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from all—except one—of the members of our party, and each hour since the matter was first broached, our enthusiasm has 659 increased. It has been the main theme of our conversation today as we journeyed. I lay awake half of last night thinking about it;—and if my wakefulness deprived my bed-fellow (Hedges) of any sleep, he has only himself and his disturbing National Park proposition to answer for it.

Our purpose to create a park can only be accomplished by untiring work and concerted action in a warfare against the incredulity and unbelief of our National legislators when our proposal shall be presented for their approval. Nevertheless, I believe we can win the battle.

I do not know of any portion of our country where a national park can be established, furnishing to visitors more wonderful attractions than here. These wonders are so different from anything we have ever seen—they are so various, so extensive—that the feeling in my mind from the moment they began to appear until we left them has been one of intense surprise and of incredulity. Every day spent in surveying them has revealed to me some new beauty, and now that I have left them, I begin to feel a skepticism which clothes them in a memory clouded by doubt.

Again, in further elucidation of what transpired, he wrote:

The question is frequently asked, “Who originated the plan of setting apart this region as a National Park?” I answer that Judge Cornelius Hedges of Helena wrote the first articles ever published by the press, urging the dedication of this region as a park. The Helena Herald of Nov. 9, 1870, contains a letter of Mr. Hedges, in which he advocated the scheme, and in my lectures delivered in Washington and New York in January, 1871, I directed attention to Mr. Hedges' suggestion, and urged the passage by Congress of an act setting apart that region as a public park. All this was several months prior to the first exploration by the U. S. Geological Survey, in charge of Dr. Hayden. The suggestion that the region should be made into a National Park was first broached to the members of our

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party on September 19, 1870, by Mr. Hedges, while we were in camp at the confluence of the Firehole and Gibbon rivers, as is related in this diary. After the return home of our party, I was informed by General Washburn that on the eve of the departure of our expedition from Helena, David E. Folsom had suggested to him the desirability of creating a park at the grand canyon and falls of the Yellowstone. This fact was unknown to Mr. Hedges,—and the boundary lines of the proposed park were extended by him so as to be commensurate with the wider range of our explorations.

General Washburn's statement shows beyond question that the man who first gave expression to the idea in any tangible, practical form, was David E. Folsom, already mentioned as having visited the region in 1869. Judge Hedges knew nothing of this at the time he advanced the suggestion and it was, of course, also original with him, and his proposition embodied a conception much broader than that of Mr. Folsom.

Fortunate it was that the members of the party so promptly, unselfishly, and warmly accepted the suggestion of Mr. Hedges and at once planned to give it practical effect.

In November, 1870, Mr. Langford went east to lecture upon the marvelous discoveries of the Washburn party. On the evening of January 19, 1871, he delivered his lecture in Washington, D. C., and on the evening of January 21 at Cooper Institute, New York City. At his Washington lecture Speaker James G. Blaine presided, and Dr. F. V. Hayden was one of the audience. In each of these lectures Langford advocated the setting aside of the region as a national park.

In the Encyclopedia Britannica, under the heading "Yellowstone National Park," Mr. Henry Gannett, the well known geographer, states that the discoveries made by the Washburn party "induced Dr. F. V. Hayden, then in charge of a Government survey, to turn his explorations in this [i. e. the Yellowstone region] direction."

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Dr. Hayden did, in 1871, as already stated, and again in 1872, thoroughly explore and map the park country. Mr. Gannett was one of his topographers in this work.

In 1872 the act establishing the park was passed. This act was included in Hayden's report of his expedition of 1871 printed in 1872, but neither in this nor in the report of the succeeding year does there seem to be any intimation regarding who first suggested this idea. For the year 1878, Dr. Hayden made another and more elaborate report, prefaced by a letter to the Secretary of the Interior, written in 1883, in which are found these words: "So far as is now known, the idea of setting apart a large tract about the sources of the Yellowstone River as a national park, originated with the writer."

I do not believe that Dr. Hayden willfully intended to make a misstatement in this connection, but I do believe that a faulty memory caused him to misstate the actual fact. Dr. Lyman B. Sperry, the well known public lecturer and educator, informed me years ago, that Dr. Hayden told him that during the field 661 season of 1871, when the idea of making a park of the Yellowstone region was advocated among his own men, following of course Langford's suggestion in his lectures, he did not believe it practicable nor wise.

General H. M. Chittenden, in his fine and very conscientious work, "The Yellowstone National Park," published in 1895, treats this matter thus:

The bill, being thus before Congress, was put through mainly by the efforts of three men, Dr. F. V. Hayden, N. P. Langford, and Delegate William H. Clagett. Dr. Hayden occupied a commanding position in this work, as representative of the government in the explorations of 1871. He was thoroughly familiar with the subject, and was equipped with an exhaustive collection of photographs and specimens gathered the previous summer. These were placed on exhibition, and were probably seen by all members of Congress. They did a work which no other agency could do, and doubtless convinced every one who saw them that the region where such wonders existed should be carefully preserved to the people

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forever. Dr. Hayden gave to the cause the energy of a genuine enthusiasm, and his work that winter will always hold a prominent place in the history of the Park.

Mr. Langford, as already stated, had publicly advocated the measure in the previous winter. He had rendered service of the utmost importance, through his publications in Scribner's Magazine in the preceding May and June. Four hundred copies of these magazines were brought and placed upon the desks of members of Congress on the days when the measure was to be brought to vote. During the entire winter, Mr. Langford devoted much of his time to the promotion of this work.

The Hon. William H. Clagett, as delegate from the Territory most directly interested in the passage of the bill, took an active personal part in its advocacy from beginning to end.

I have the greatest admiration and esteem for General Chittenden as a personal friend, a man, and a historian. But I cannot but feel that he has, with the best motives and intentions in the world, scarcely awarded the honors in this affair in an equitable manner. He has given to Hayden, who did not, originally, have any faith in the idea, entirely too much credit, and to Langford and Clagett altogether too little. Langford was the John the Baptist of the National Park idea, crying aloud both in the wilderness and out of it, in advocacy of the Park, before Hayden ever saw the region. As previously stated, the first suggestion of it that came to Hayden was from Langford's own lips from the lecture platform. Langford and Clagett, as will appear later, had the movement for segregation well under way before Hayden became connected with it, or, possibly, even knew of it.

In the report of the Secretary of the Interior for 1910, Volume I, page 54, are found these words:

John Muir is authority for the statement that Professor Hayden, above all others, is entitled to the credit of securing the dedication of the Yellowstone as a national park, for he

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led the first scientific exploring party into it, described it, and urged upon Congress its preservation.

It is a matter for regret that John Muir ever expressed such an opinion. Mr. Muir may, possibly, base his belief upon what General Chittenden has said, and further, perhaps, upon what the U. S. Geological Survey has stated, for the latter also seems disposed to uphold Hayden as the one all important factor in the establishment of the Park.

We have in the archives of our own Historical Society a letter which gives the facts in regard to this matter.

On July 9, 1894, Ex-Governor William R. Marshall, then Secretary of the Society, wrote to William H. Clagett, the former Territorial Delegate in Congress from Montana, asking him: "Who are entitled to the principal credit for the passage of the act of Congress establishing the Yellowstone National Park?"

Mr. Clagett, who introduced the bill in Congress, should certainly have known who the men were and in what degree each was entitled to credit, and he replied as follows:

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, July 14th, 1894.

Wm. R. Marshall,

Secretary, Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul, Minn.,

Dear Sir: Your favor of July 9th is just received. I am glad that you have called my attention to the question, "Who are entitled to the principal credit for the passage of the act of Congress establishing the Yellowstone National Park?" The history of that measure, as far as known to me, is as follows, to-wit: In the fall of 1870, soon after the return of the Washburn-Langford party, two printers at Deer Lodge City, Montana, went into the Firehole basin and cut a large number of poles, intended to come back the next summer and fence in the tract of land containing the principal geysers, and hold possession for

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speculative purposes, as the Hutchins family so long held the Yosemite 663 valley. One of these men was named Harry Norton. He subsequently wrote a book on the park. The other one was named Brown. He now lives in Spokane, Wash., and both of them in the summer of 1871 worked in the New Northwest office at Deer Lodge. When I learned from them in the late fall of 1870 or spring of 1871 what they intended to do, I remonstrated with them and stated that from the description given by them and by members of Mr. Langford's party, the whole region should be made into a National Park and no private proprietorship be allowed.

I was elected Delegate to Congress from Montana in August, 1871, and after the election, Nathaniel P. Langford, Cornelius Hedges and myself had a consultation in Helena, and agreed that every effort should be made to establish the Park as soon as possible, and before any person had got a serious foothold—Mr. McCartney, at the Mammoth Hot Springs, being the only one who at that time had any improvements made. In December, 1871, Mr. Langford came to Washington and remained there for some time, and we two counseled together about the Park project. I drew the bill to establish the Park, and never knew Professor Hayden in connection with that bill, except that I requested Mr. Langford to get from him a description of the boundaries of the proposed Park. There was some delay in getting the description, and my recollection is that Langford brought me the description after consultation with Professor Hayden. I then filled the blank in the bill with the description, and the bill passed both Houses of Congress just as it was drawn and without any change or amendment whatsoever.

After the bill was drawn, Langford stated to me that Senator Pomeroy of Kansas was very anxious to have the honor of introducing the bill in the Senate; and as he (Pomeroy) was the chairman of the Senate committee on Public Lands, in order to facilitate its passage, I had a clean copy made of the bill and on the first call day in the House, introduced the original there, and then went over to the Senate Chamber and handed the copy to Senator Pomeroy, who immediately introduced it in the Senate. The bill passed the Senate first and came to the House, and passed the House without amendment, at a time when I

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happened to be at the other end of the Capitol, and hence I was not present when it actually passed the House.

Since the passage of this bill there have been so many men who have claimed the exclusive credit for its passage, that I have lived for twenty years, suffering from a chronic feeling of disgust whenever the subject was mentioned. So far as my personal knowledge goes, the first idea of making it a public park occurred to myself; but from information received from Langford and others, it has always been my opinion that Hedges, Langford, and myself formed the same idea about the same time, and we all three acted together in Montana, and afterwards Langford and I acted with Professor Hayden in Washington, in the winter of 1871–2.

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The fact is that the matter was well under way before Professor Hayden was ever heard of in connection with that measure. When he returned to Washington in 1871, he brought with him a large number of specimens from different parts of the Park, which were on exhibition in one of the rooms of the Capitol or in the Smithsonian Institute (one or the other), while Congress was in session, and he rendered valuable services in exhibiting these specimens and explaining the geological and other features of the proposed Park, and between him, Langford and myself, I believe there was not a single member of Congress in either House who was not fully posted by one or the other of us in personal interviews; so much so, that the bill practically passed both Houses without objection.

It has always been a pleasure to me to give to Professor Hayden and to Senator Pomeroy, and Mr. Dawes of Mass., all of the credit which they deserve in connection with the passage of that measure, but the truth of the matter is that the origin of the movement which created the Park was with Hedges, Langford and myself; and after Congress met, Langford and I probably did two-thirds, if not three-fourths, of all the work connected with its passage.

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I think that the foregoing letter contains a full statement of what you wish, and I hope that you will be able to correct, at least to some extent, the misconceptions which the selfish vanity of some people has occasioned on the subject.

Very truly yours, [signed] Wm. H. Clagett.

Mr. Langford published this letter in his journal and added a pregnant paragraph thus:

It is true that Professor Hayden joined with Mr. Clagett and myself in working for the passage of the act of dedication, but no person can divide with Cornelius Hedges and David E. Folsom the honor of originating the idea of creating the Yellowstone Park.

Mr. Langford was not the man to withhold credit where it was due. On the contrary, he was far more inclined to give full measure and running over. By no possibility can what he says be construed in any other light than that Clagett presents the facts exactly as they were and states the truth regarding the matter. If these two did not know the truth no one did, and Clagett's letter evinces no small, mean spirit in the matter, but quite the contrary. Dr. Hayden is certainly entitled to full credit for his work in the establishment of the Park, no less and no more; and this applies equally to all who were engaged in that work.

The simple truth is that to Folsom and Hedges, as Mr. Langford says, is due the genesis of the gospel for the creation of 665 national parks; that the Washburn-Doane party are entitled, for the greater part, to the credit of preaching and expounding that gospel; that Langford, Clagett, and Hedges, were its insistent heralds and promoters; and that Langford, Clagett, and Hayden, probably in the order named, were the men to whom is primarily due the credit for the passage through Congress of the act establishing the Park. In other words, to the Washburn-Doane party is chiefly due the fact that we have a Yellowstone National Park.

That Dr. Hayden's official position, his photographs and specimens, were potent factors in the final argument, is, without doubt, most true, and no one desires to deprive him of the

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credit thus justly due him. But he was, nevertheless, an eleventh hour convert to the idea, and in his labors in behalf of it, and must take position accordingly.

It is certainly to be regretted that these men of science and official position have unwittingly taken a stand that, to the outsider, savors of a determination to arrogate practically all the credit for this achievement to one only who was himself so prominent in science and official life.

While, as previously stated, there may be no memorial monuments standing in honor of this band of wilderness explorers, the great Park itself is the best and most enduring memorial of the service they rendered to mankind.

Until the last trump shall sound and the earth be dissolved by fervent heat, that wonderful domain, the most unique area of its size in the world, will remain a tangible and glorious memorial to the prevision and abnegation that made it possible. Let us also be just and frankly include in the category of deserving names that of David E. Folsom, as one equally entitled to the plaudits of mankind for the discovery and establishment of this magnificent Park. A memorial tablet attached to that lava entrance arch at Gardiner, in the absence of a more pretentious monument in this Park, would be an appropriate recognition in part of these discoverers.

The discoveries and the influence of the Washburn-Doane party are strongly, and, I may add, very sensibly, reflected in the nomenclature of the Park. The names that they applied to objects were based upon analogy and common sense, and were devoid of eccentricity or the grotesque. A few of these names that are so familiar to travelers of the present day are, Tower fall, Mt. Washburn, heretofore noted, Crystal fall, Crater hills, Mud geyser and Mud Volcano, Alum creek, Mounts Doane and Langford, and Old Faithful, the Grotto, Castle, Giant, Bee Hive, Giantess, and other geysers.

I have stated that when Mr. Langford in 1862 started westward, he followed a trail that eventually developed a new feature in national conservation and in recreation. That trail

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led him, as we have seen, to the upper Yellowstone region, and Yellowstone National Park was the result. That was the first national park to be established in this country, and we set the fashion for the world. I am reminded of that well known line of my boyhood days as true today as it ever was,

“Great oaks from little acorns grow.”

Yellowstone Park was set aside March 1, 1872. There are now, according to the report of the Secretary of the Interior for 1910, thirteen national parks, aggregating more than 4,600,000 acres in area. The states of Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, and Washington, have each one such park wholly within their borders.

California has three national parks; and one park, the Yellowstone, occupies a part of three adjoining states, Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana, with by far the most of it lying in Wyoming. The Yellowstone is the largest of all these parks, and they range in size from 780 acres for Sully's Hill Park, in North Dakota, to 2,142,720 acres for Yellowstone Park.

Montana has the credit of having the first and the largest national park established, the Yellowstone, partially within its borders, and also has the last and the second largest one set aside, Glacier National Park, wholly within its boundary lines.

It may with entire truth be said that, through the personality of Mr. Langford and his relationship to Yellowstone Park, the four states of Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, and Minnesota, have a close bond of sympathy and union. Certainly the three states first named, in which the park lies, can well admit having a strong and sentimental feeling, of the higher sort, for the sister state that loaned to them for so many years one of its 667 citizens who aided so signally in accomplishing such important results for humanity.

Upon the formal establishment of the park, Mr. Langford was, very appropriately, made its first Superintendent. He thus continued for five years, but the position was largely

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one in name only and quite a thankless one at that. No efforts were made by Congress, characteristically, to open the park, no appropriation whatever being made to build trails or roads, or to preserve the park from devastation. Characteristically, again, these presumptive representatives of the wisdom of the nation allowed the Superintendent to pay his own expenses most patriotically and unselfishly, and to perform his duties, such as they were, without any salary. This Mr. Langford did during his entire incumbency of the office. Efforts were strenuously and continuously made by sinister minded persons to obtain concessions in the park for purposes inimical to the spirit in which it was set apart. These attempts Mr. Langford, with the consistent and unyielding support of Gen. B. R. Cowen, the Assistant Secretary of the Interior, was enabled to frustrate.

The park was thus fortunately preserved, in the beginning, from an improper course of administration, one that would most certainly have resulted in gross scandal and national disgrace.

And what of the probity and moral stamina of the man who in that day could maintain himself for five years in such a position unspotted and incorruptible? The Minnesota Historical Society may well be proud of the fact that the one time vigilante, explorer, and National Park Superintendent, at the time of his call from earthly labors had been for seven years its dignified and honored president.

As I began so I close! Fate is a stern and inexorable mistress. She doeth whatsoever she will, and we may but rarely modify or change her decrees. If in his sturdy, vigorous manhood she led our former friend and associate by strenuous and danger-lurking trails, she vouchsafed to him in the evening of his days a beautiful, even tempered, but still useful life.

As he slowly approached the summit—his final climb—of that last divide, the one between time and eternity, that sooner or later we must all climb, he went forward calm, serene, confident, 668 with steady, unflinching steps. “Sustained and soothed by an unfaltering

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trust” in Him who had led him safely thus far, I can fancy him softly exclaiming as he toiled onward, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”

And as he reached the crest of that last divide and his spirit, loosed from its earthly tabernacle, swept with its spirit sight that vast and “mysterious realm” that opened before it, what a vision it beheld! Is it a wholly fanciful picture that among that innumerable host of transfigured countenances that thronged before him there, with beckoning arms, were those who had gone before, with whom he had in those trying days of old stood shoulder to shoulder in upholding law and order and right living; that there were seen those with whom he had labored through the defiles and marshes and obstructions of the Yellowstone; and, again, those who in his later days had known a life made sweeter and better through his efforts to aid distressed and suffering humanity?

Possibly the thought is, indeed, fanciful, but why may we not thus indulge it when it comports so fully with that life, now closed forever on earth? And we may rest assured that, having crossed the border land, and being brought into the presence of that Lord and Master whom he had here served with fidelity, he heard in accents strong and loving the blessed salutation, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”